

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): In combination with an airbag module having an airbag and a gas generator assigned to the airbag, a housing configuration, comprising:

a housing having an airbag-accommodating space and a gas-generator-accommodating space formed therein;

said housing having [[a]] an upper housing wall with an airbag outlet opening formed therein and having a covering device, said covering device being configured to close said airbag outlet opening when the airbag module is in a non-activated basic position and to open up said airbag outlet opening so that the airbag deploys freely when the airbag module is in an activated state;

said gas-generator-accommodating space accommodating the gas generator, said airbag-accommodating space accommodating the airbag such that the airbag is disposed folded up in said airbag-accommodating space behind said covering device when the airbag module is in the non-activated basic position;

said airbag outlet opening defining an airbag outlet opening plane, said airbag-accommodating space being situated, with reference to the airbag outlet opening plane, laterally next to said gas-generator-accommodating space;

said housing having a lower housing wall region disposed opposite said covering device and bounding said airbag-accommodating space;

said housing having a gas-generator-accommodating-space housing wall extending substantially parallel to said lower housing wall region;

a partition wall separating said airbag-accommodating space from said gas-generator-accommodating space, said partition wall extending in a direction away from said upper housing wall into an interior of said housing as far as said lower housing wall region;

said lower housing wall region and said gas-generator-accommodating-space housing wall together forming a gas-duct segment configured such that gas is guided along an airbag emergence direction away from a housing side opposite the airbag outlet opening plane and into the airbag; and

said gas duct segment being disposed in said housing on the housing side opposite the airbag outlet opening plane, said gas duct segment extending substantially parallel to said airbag outlet opening plane and extending, when viewed in cross section through said housing, from said gas-generator-accommodating space to said airbag-accommodating space.

Claim 2 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment forming a gas distributor;

said gas-duct end segment protruding as a pillar into a substantially central region of said airbag-accommodating space, when viewed in cross section, such that said gas-duct end segment extends from below substantially into a center of the airbag being folded up in said airbag-accommodating space in order to introduce gas centrally; and

said gas distributor having at least one gas blow-out opening formed therein for a flow of gas into the airbag.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The housing configuration according to claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor; and

said gas distributor having at least one gas blow-out opening formed on an end side of said gas distributor in order to direct a flow of gas in a direction toward said covering device such that gas flows in the airbag emergence direction.

Claim 4 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, wherein:

said housing has a substantially rectangular cross section; and

said airbag-accommodating space and said gas-generator-accommodating space provided in said housing each have a substantially rectangular cross section and are separated from one another by said partition wall as a common wall therebetween.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The housing configuration according to claim 2, wherein said gas distributor adjoins

said gas-duct segment extending substantially parallel to said outlet opening plane and extends substantially vertically upward into said airbag-accommodating space such that said gas duct is a substantially L-shaped gas duct.

Claim 6 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, including a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor, said gas distributor being configured as an integral part of said lower housing wall region and extending, when viewed in cross section, as a double-walled part from said lower housing wall region disposed opposite said covering device, upward into said airbag-accommodating space.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The housing configuration according to claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor;

said gas duct segment has a gas-duct mouth at said lower housing wall region opposite said covering device; and

said gas distributor is a separate component separate from
said gas duct segment and is fastened to said gas duct segment
at said gas-duct mouth.

Claim 8 (original): The housing configuration according to
claim 7, wherein said gas distributor is fastened in a gas
tight manner to said lower housing wall region at said gas-
duct mouth.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The housing configuration
according to claim 7, wherein said gas distributor is selected
from a group consisting of a plurality of gas distributors
having at least one of respectively different numbers of gas
blow-out openings and respectively different gas blow-out
opening geometries has at least one gas blow out opening and
is capable of being interchanged with another gas distributor
having a different number of gas blow-out openings or a
different gas blow-out opening geometry.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The housing configuration
according to claim 7, wherein:

said gas distributor has latching devices; and

said lower housing wall region has mating latching devices at
~~said gas duct mouth~~ for releasably latching to said latching
devices.

Claim 11 (original): The housing configuration according to
claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said
lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor;

said gas distributor extending in said airbag-accommodating
space such that a gap clearance is provided between said gas
distributor and said covering device and such that said gas
distributor divides said airbag-accommodating space
substantially in half when viewed in cross section, into left
and right airbag-accommodating-space portions; and

said left and said right airbag-accommodating-space portions
accommodating a respective folded portion of said airbag.

Claim 12 (original): The housing configuration according to
claim 11, wherein said airbag has a fabric layer spanning from
said left airbag-accommodating-space portion to said right
airbag-accommodating-space portion.

Claim 13 (original): The housing configuration according
claim 1, wherein:

said lower housing wall region has edge regions disposed
opposite from one another, when viewed in cross section; and

said airbag is fastened in a gastight manner to said edge
regions of said lower housing wall region.

Claim 14 (original): The housing configuration according to
claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said
lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor;

said housing having a longitudinal extent defining a
longitudinal direction; and

at least one of said gas duct and said gas distributor
extending in the longitudinal direction along at least a part
of the longitudinal extent of said housing.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The housing configuration
according to claim 1, wherein:

said housing has an open end side for access into said gas-generator-accommodating space and said airbag-accommodating space; and

end side cover parts close said open end side of said housing when said airbag module is installed.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The housing configuration according to claim 15, wherein said end side cover parts close said open end side of said housing in a gastight manner.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The housing configuration according to claim 15, wherein said end side cover parts are screwed to said housing.

Claim 18 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, wherein:

said airbag outlet opening has an edge region; and

said covering device is a cover secured to said edge region of said airbag outlet opening.

Claim 19 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 18, wherein said cover is pivotably coupled to said edge region of said airbag outlet opening.

Claim 20 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 18, wherein said cover is releasably latched to said edge region of said airbag outlet opening.

Claim 21 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, wherein said airbag outlet opening in said upper housing wall extends substantially entirely over said airbag-accommodating space.

Claim 22 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, wherein said housing is an extruded housing.

Claim 23 (original): The housing configuration according to claim 1, including:

a gas duct having a gas-duct end segment protruding from said lower housing wall region and forming a gas distributor; and

said airbag module, when in the activated state, producing a flow of gas introduced via said gas duct from below into the airbag and inflating the airbag such that the air bag exerts a

lift-off force on said covering device and, the flow of gas being directed via said gas duct in the airbag emergence direction exerting an additional lift-off force on said covering device.

Claim 24 (currently amended): In combination with a motor vehicle having a windshield, an occupant protection device, comprising:

a front passenger airbag module installed near the windshield, said front passenger airbag module having an airbag and a gas generator assigned to said airbag;

a housing having an airbag-accommodating space and a gas-generator-accommodating space formed therein;

said housing having [[a]] an upper housing wall with an airbag outlet opening formed therein and having a covering device, said covering device being configured to close said airbag outlet opening when said front passenger airbag module is in a non-activated basic position and to open up said airbag outlet opening so that said airbag deploys freely when said front passenger airbag module is in an activated state;

said gas-generator-accommodating space accommodating said gas generator, said airbag-accommodating space accommodating said airbag such that said airbag is disposed folded up in said airbag-accommodating space behind said covering device when said front passenger airbag module is in the non-activated basic position;

said airbag outlet opening defining an airbag outlet opening plane, said airbag-accommodating space being situated, with reference to the airbag outlet opening plane, laterally next to said gas-generator-accommodating space;

said housing having a lower housing wall region disposed opposite said covering device and bounding said airbag-accommodating space;

said housing having a gas-generator-accommodating-space housing wall extending substantially parallel to said lower housing wall region;

a partition wall separating said airbag-accommodating space from said gas-generator-accommodating space, said partition wall extending in a direction away from said upper housing wall into an interior of said housing as far as said lower housing wall region;

said lower housing wall region and said gas-generator-accommodating-space housing wall together forming a gas-duct segment configured such that gas is guided along an airbag emergence direction away from a housing side opposite the airbag outlet opening plane and into the airbag; and

said gas duct segment being disposed in said housing on the housing side opposite the airbag outlet opening plane, said gas duct segment extending substantially parallel to said airbag outlet opening plane and extending, when viewed in cross section through said housing, from said gas-generator-accommodating space to said airbag-accommodating space.

Appl. No. 10/727,752
Amndt. dated August 16, 2004
Reply to Office action of June 7, 2004

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1 and 2 which replace the originally filed Figs. 1 and 2.

In Fig. 1, the section line has been labeled with Roman numeral "II" and a schematically shown windshield has been added. The section label in Fig. 2 has accordingly been changed to "II-II."

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (Figs. 1 and 2)